

THE POKEY PRESS

VOLUME 4

OCTOBER 1987

NUMBER 9

THE COUNTDOWN CONTINUES

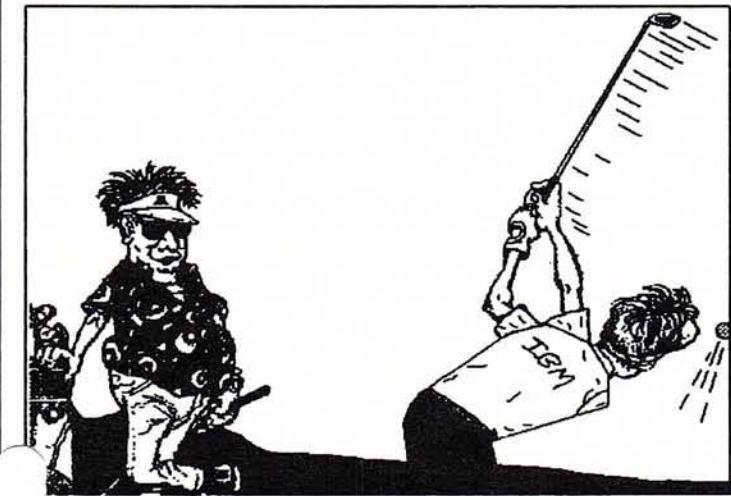


THE ST STARTS PLAYING
WITH THE BIG BOYS WITH
THE INTRODUCTION OF
pc:ditto

PLUS:

- REVIEWS OF PUBLISHING PARTNER AND THE P.R. CONNECTION
- DESKTOP PUBLISHING
- LOCAL NEWS AND COMMENTARY

AND MUCH, MUCH MORE.....



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ATARI COMPUTER CLUB OF THE PALM BEACHES

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The ATARI COMPUTER CLUB of the PALM BEACHES meets the second Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in the Science Museum and Planetarium at Dreher Park, West Palm Beach, Florida. See back page for a map.

Please use the following addresses to correspond with the club. All correspondence should be addressed to The ATARI COMPUTER CLUB of the Palm Beaches and sent to the proper address, depending on the nature of the correspondence.

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Advertising in The POKEY PRESS means that you are reaching thousands of ATARI owners locally and internationally with your products and services. Each month, The POKEY PRESS is distributed at the local meeting to our members, to local computer dealers, and to over 130 other ATARI user groups across the U.S.A. and the world. (Press run now over 700)

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FROM THE CENTER SEAT



BY JIM WOODWARD

"FROM THE CENTER SEAT (NOT "FROM THE TOILET SEAT", AS VICTOR CALLS IT!)"

SUNATAR '87 ROLLING ALONG

Things are rolling along quite nicely, thank you. Look on page three for the latest news, and elsewhere in this issue for information on ordering our terrific SUNATAR '87 T-shirts and hats. The show is going to be a blast. Start making plans to attend now.

LIKE THE NEW STYLE?

If you don't, you have serious problems! Ken White has worked very hard to give the newsletter its new look. Please thank him for all the work he has done. And don't forget to help him with it by contributing articles, reviews, etc. If you don't, then he has to fill space with his long, rambling, and strange stories. Like last month. Get the point?

SPEAKING OF THE NEWSLETTER...

While Ken White was out of town, actually out of the country, I was in charge of the newsletter. HA! What a laugh! Like leaving a

SEE CENTER SEAT, PAGE 15



THE GOOD SEC'S COLUMN

BY DON MERCER

Written this month
by someone who forgot what good sex is.

Here is what happened at the August General Meeting (8/11) and what transpired at the August Executive Committee (8/18) meeting. First off, when you walked into the auditorium of the Science Museum before the meeting, you noticed that the lights were turned down. And for good reason. Club members and visitors were being treated to a look through the 3-D glasses from the Antic Catalog and the game "Wanderer". Many skeptics had their minds changed when they saw the display through the glasses. The effect is amazing, it is 3-D on the ST.

Then President Jim Woodward told the gathered throngs that the bulletin board had acquired a new modem that would allow calls at 1200 baud. To do this, a P:R Connection was also acquired.

News on the upcoming SUNATAR '87 show was next. Jim was reading the list of those who had signed up. As he was finishing up, Club Treasurer Al Tressel arrived with news of three more companies interested in attending the show. Other details on the show were announced.

Following that excitement, the new members were announced, the Disk of the Month was described and announcements were made on the 8-bit library by Bob Shores and on the ST library by David Bernard.

SEE GOOD SEC'S, PAGE 14

SUNATARI '87!

THE PIECES BEGIN TO FALL INTO PLACE...

by Jim Woodward

LIKE A FIN THROUGH THE WATER....

Are you ready? It's coming! And it's growing bigger each day! No, I'm not talking about "Jaws 5". Not even "Friday the 13th, Part 8". I'm talking about SUNATARI '87. The only Atari-Specific computer show to be held in the Southeastern United States this year. SUNATARI '87 is being hosted by The Atari Computer Club of the Palm Beaches.

The excitement level is growing. Imagine, being able to talk to representatives from Atari about the new products. Imagine being able to see new hardware, software and accessories and meet the representatives of the companies who produce them. Imagine being able to pick up those pieces of software, hardware and all those accessories at unbelievable prices. Well, you won't have to imagine too much longer because November 21-22 is coming quicker than you think. Start making your plans now!

The Royce Hotel in West Palm Beach is already ring up for the onslaught of Atari Fanatics. And you won't be disappointed.

The hotel is very beautiful and has lots of parking. The show committee is working hard to make this show the best one yet. And so far, it looks like it will be.

ENTERTAINMENT TONIGHT....

Who's gonna be there? That's what is on everyone minds lately. Well, as of this writing the following companies have committed to be at the show (in no particular order): Michtron, Astra, Avante-Guard Systems, Antic Publishing, Hybrid Arts, Word Perfect, Intersect Software, QMI, Migraph, ICD, Carina Software Systems, The Computer Room, Computer Spectrum, and of course, Atari Corporation (Atari is bringing five representatives to the show in addition to the products they bring). And more are signing up each day.

We are also working on having lots of informational seminars and discussions, covering a wide range of topics. The "Stars" of the Atari World are being invited. Already committed to appearing is Tom Hudson, author of Degas, Degas Elite and Cad 3-D. And more are being added as the show gets closer.

THE FRUIT OF OUR LABORS...

Here is a little background information on what has been done so far. The committee mailed out show information and reservation forms to over 120 different vendors. We also mailed out information and advertising for the show to 47 other user groups in the Southeastern U.S. and the Panama Canal Zone. These groups have been offered discount admission tickets and information on the show. We expect a big turnout from the user groups in the South.

What can you expect to see at the show? Lots of new

products. SUNATARI '87 is a little over 2 weeks after the Winter Comdex. This means that you will see lots of things that haven't been seen yet by the rest of the Atari world. You may even be able to buy some of them. And if you can't buy them, they can go on your Christmas (or Hanukkah) wish list. And if that isn't enough, how about some door prizes? Each hour of the show, we will be giving away valuable software to hardware. Now you really have a reason to show up. You could go home with something real nice.

HAVE A NICE DAY...

Ready to take on the Maze? Hybrid Arts will be there in force with synthesizers and of course, Midi Maze: To Kill A Happy Face.

They will be bringing professional musicians to demonstrate their software on Atari machines. Then, take on 15 other players playing Midi Maze. The object (for those of you who have been in caves for the last few months) is to survive in a closed maze. Then, as if that isn't enough, the other players are trying to kill you. (Nice game, huh?) Last one alive wins.



SUNATARI '87 logo on the front and the Atari fuji and the famous "Power Without The Price" logo on the back. There are two different shirts, the two color shirt and the deluxe multi-color shirt. The hat features the SUNATARI '87 logo. These items will be available at local computer stores and are available by mail for those of you who are not in the area. Look for the order blank elsewhere in this issue.

Want more information? No problem. Just write to us at the address on the back of this newsletter. Want the news quicker? Just call the Atari Computer Club of the Palm Beaches BBS at 305-641-5372, 24 hours, 300-1200 baud. The show information is in the Bulletins file, and it is dated so you know just how up-to-date the news is.

Remember those dates, November 21 & 22, at the Royce Hotel in West Palm Beach (see the show ad elsewhere in this issue for a map). Admission is \$4.00 at the door, \$3.00 with a discount ticket, children under 12 admitted free with a paid adult admission. Show hours are 10am to 6pm on Saturday the 21st and 10am to 4pm on Sunday the 22nd. The weather in the West Palm Beach area during late November is the best in the country. There will be lots to see and do every minute of the show, so start making plans to attend now.

YOU'LL LOVE IT. YOU HAVE MY WORD ON IT.

As President of the Club and Chairman of the SUNATARI '87 Committee, I would like to extend my personal invitation to you. You, your family and friends are welcome to be at the show and enjoy yourselves. The show committee is doing everything possible to make the show a success. But no matter what we do, it won't be a success without you. Hope to see you there.**

An exciting new BUZZWORD —THAT'S FUN!

FROM THE REVIEWERS:

"If the manufacturer's knew how much I hate trivia games, they'd never have sent it. That would have been a crime, since I would never have obtained it myself — despite my prejudice, I must give it a thumbs-up. . . . **Buzzword** is a fun game, and a good vocabulary-building tool."

Steve Panak, Analog Computing, November 1986

"Parents know that parental approval is the kiss of death for any kid-aimed product, so if you're trying to get the children to learn something with computer games, hide this article. Then give **Buzzword**. . . ."

Larry Blasko, Associated Press

"**Buzzword** is very educational and a fun game to play . . . If you get this game, you won't regret it because you will have hours and hours of fun. . . ."

Andrew Blasko, Age 13

AND FROM OTHERS:

"The best item I saw at COMDEX. I still play it regularly."

Walter Kennamer, Cleveland, Ohio

"I've never seen anything like this before. May I take a picture?"

A reporter from W. Germany

"A great game. My wife and kids absolutely love it."

Jerry Kaye, The Softwarehouse, Golden, CO

What is BUZZWORD?

Buzzword can best be described as a new concept in word-guessing games. Although **Buzzword** can be compared to a trivia game in that it tests your knowledge of 200 different topics from English, history, geography, sciences, sports, music, TV, and the unusual — unlike ordinary question and answer games, **Buzzword** is best compared to a game show where the players use a combination of skill, luck, and strategy to guess words, and earn points while trying to solve the puzzles presented. The game can be played by one or two persons or teams, be tailored to the interests and skill level of the players, and be enjoyed by both youngsters and adults alike.

Best of all, **Buzzword** is a fun game.

To Order:

Contact your local dealer, or send \$42.95 (Atari ST version), or \$39.95 (IBM PC, Atari 800, or Commodore 64 versions)

Plus \$3.00 for shipping and handling. Colorado residents add 3.6% sales tax.

MasterCard or Visa Accepted.

Atari ST version requires a color monitor.

The Buzzword Game Company, Inc.

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Aurora, Colorado 80015

(303) 693-GAME



WHO IS THIS GUY AND WHAT IS HE DOING INSIDE YOUR ST?

by Scott von Berg

Ok, kids. Time to straighten you all out about that guy with the pipe in ST ASCII areas 29-32. He is not Hugh Hefner. Nor is he Jack Tramiel. AND HE IS ABSOLUTELY NOT MR. ROGERS!!!

His name is J.R. "BOB" Dobbs, and he was a bit actor and founder of the Church of the SubGenius. I'll tell you one thing, it wasn't his acting that got him in one of the hottest new computers known to man.

Those guys down at Atari are rather nutty, and, being rather nutty myself, I joined the Church about three or four months ago. I think that once I explain what the Church is, you'll have some idea of your own about how he got in there.

THE HAZY ORIGINS OF THE CHURCH

The origins of the Church of the SubGenius are hazy at best. The earliest known nationally circulated Church literature bears copywrites dating no earlier than the late 1970's, which would indicate that the Church had a relatively recent arrival on the scene. But Church old-timers like Rev. Ivan Stang date their involvement in the cult back to the late 50's.

At that time the Church was a local Dallas-based group numbering no more than a couple dozen members, led by founder J.R. Dobbs (referred to today as "BOB" by cult-members - this in spite of the fact that there is nothing resembling "Bob" in Mr. Dobbs' name - Sub-Genii members (aka Subs) are inherently lazy, and Dobbs' name slowly degenerated from J.R. Dobbs to Robbs to Rob and finally to BOB). Dobbs had been a bit-actor in movies (most of them low budget flicks, though he did have the singular honor of being in "The Day The Earth Stood Still") and had served an extended stint as an aluminum siding salesman. Dobbs' success as a salesman enabled him to build up a sizable nest-egg and put him on sure footing for convincing others of his sincerity.

But the formation of a new "religion" wasn't high on Dobbs's list of priorities...at least not until the mid-1950's. It was in the mid-50's that Dobbs began to hear voices, apparently inside his head --- voices he identified alternately as aliens (X-ists) and as a so-called Space God (Jehovah-1). It seems that Dobbs never went for any psychological evalution of the problem; instead he listened to what these voices were telling him, and considered the ideas they were generating. And he decided to form a church to spread the word that these voices were giving him.

ACK IS A TRICKSTER

Dobbs wasted little time in developing a small but devoted

following. Early SubGenius emphasis was on self-development (hence the name) and Dobbs' political philosophy, which shared many elements of the far right ideology of Robert Welch's John Birch Society. The mid-50's, of course, were a time of serious worry about the "communist menace" and Dobbs' philosophy fit in well with the times. As events would prove, the philosophy of the church would change (as would that of Dobbs himself). In the conservative fifties, the church was conservative. In the liberal sixties and seventies, the church was more liberal. And the church has returned to conservatism in the conservative Reagen-years of the eighties.

The church might have remained nothing more than a small group of right-wing nutballs except for a few unexpected twists. The first twist was Dobbs' serious extended love affair with LSD in the late 1960's and early 1970's. During this period, there was a time when the Church turned to a period of experimentation with group sex and drugs.

The second twist was the arrival of Dr. Philo Drummond in the late 1970's. Drummond, who had prior experience in PR, and was a graduate of est, saw much potential in the tiny Church and worked his way to a position of power second to only to Dobbs himself. It was he who got "BOB"'s face on Church flyers and who started a mass recruitment of new members.

Branches of the Church (called "clenches", for some obscure reason - possibly connected with the abovementioned experimentation with group sex) spread to Little Rock and Austin as original members of the church moved to those cities. And the most innovative change was a push for a policy of clenched autonomy, both theologically and organizationally.

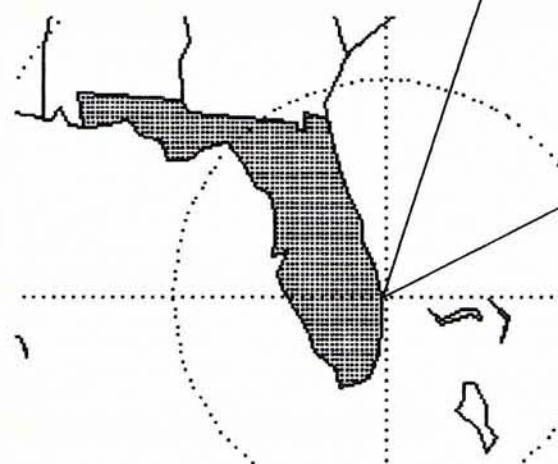
Of course, as SubGenii proliferated, so did the gods and demons in the SubGenii parthenon. What had started as a neo-UFO cult in the 1950's had evolved into a polytheistic grab-bag of weirdness in the 1980's. When groups of SubGenii gather, one hears talk of The Conspiracy (a worldwide conspiracy consisting of all governments, all governmental agencies, etc. directed against "the common man"....all of this cold war stuff you read about in the paper is just part of an elaborate conspiracy designed to make your life unpleasant) and of Pinks (which are your typical liberal bleeding-heart commie cowards - of course, the term Pink or Pink Boy can be just about anyone else a member of the church doesn't like.) Talk also turns to Slack (which represents all the goodness of the universe) and Nonslack (which represents all the badness of the universe).

THE CHURCH AS IT IS TODAY

J.R. Dobbs was "called home" by Jehovah-1 in the mid-80's,
SEE BOB, PAGE 16

THE STARS OF THE ATARI WORLD ARE COMING.... ARE YOU?

THE FIRST
ATARI-SPECIFIC
COMPUTER SHOW
IN
THE SOUTHEAST



THE ROYCE HOTEL
BELVEDERE ROAD AT
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NOVEMBER 21-22, 1987

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8-BIT PRODUCT REVIEWS

THE P:R: CONNECTION FROM ICD A WORTHY ALTERNATIVE TO THE 850 INTERFACE

by Gary Loveless

As of late, ICD has been on a rampage with massive support for the Atari 8-bit line. One of the latest releases is the P:R: Connection.

The P:R: Connection is an interface between the Atari 8-bit and other RS-232 devices. These devices may include modems, parallel printers, serial printers, hard drives and many other things. The P:R: Connection was made as an alternative to buying the now "extinct" Atari 850 interface. While there are Atari 850 interfaces still out there, they run as much as \$120, while the P:R: Connection has a list price of just \$59.95.

The P:R: Connection is very simple to set up. Since it draws power from the host computer, make sure that it is the peripheral plugged into the computer port. The nice thing about this interface is that it allows you do "daisy chain." Modem cables and printer cables have to be bought separately. (ICD sells these for \$16.)

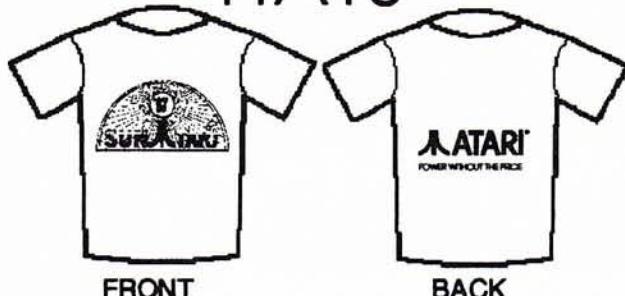
I have not run into any problems with this unit myself, and I use it every day. I have a modem and printer hooked up to it and it works fine.

It is fully compatible with the old 850 interface. Being small and compact it takes up very little room at the computer desk. It has no external power supply, thus telling you it draws power from the host computer. (1200XL owners note: your computer requires an internal modification before the P:R: Connection will work properly with it.)

THE INTERFACE PORTS



SUNATARI '87 T-SHIRTS AND HATS



FRONT

BACK

SunAtari '87 T-Shirts come in two styles (one-color logo or deluxe, 6-color logo) and in two colors (Atari Blue or ST Silver). Hats are blue or silver with the SunAtari '87 logo on the front panel. Get yours today. Supplies are limited.

R1: This is the main RS232 serial port since it supports full handshaking.

R2: This is the other RS232 port and is really only used when you need an extra. (make sure the software supports the 'R2:' device.)

P: This is your parallel printer port.

I have had my P:R: Connection for about 2 months now and have never had any problems with it yet. It is worth the purchase of the P:R: Connection compared to the 850 interface.

The only small problem that I regret to tell you is that since the P:R: Connection only has 2 RS232 ports it does not allow you to do 'porting' like you can do on an Atari 850 using 'R4.' And that's a minor problem for the majority of applications that the average user would use it for.

So you're saying "Is this thing really worth it?" Well yes it is! Personally, I wanted to upgrade from 1200 baud from 300 baud, and I wasn't going to wait for the Atari SX212. So I called a dealer and got an Avatex 1200hc for \$115, "Wow" I thought, then he said "What kinda computer you have" I said "Atari" then he said "You'll need an interface". I thought to myself "what the hell is that" So he said "We have the Atari 850 interface for \$119.95 or the P:R: Connection for 59.95" So seeing that I didn't have that much money I got the P:R: instead. Just goes to show you what price alternatives can do for you.

All you people have fun out there, especially the ones in bbs land!!

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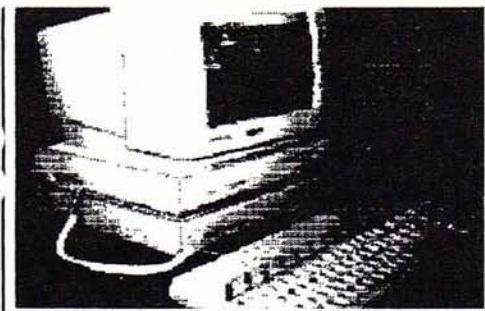
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ST NOTES

THE FINISHED PRODUCT DESKTOP PUBLISHING DEMYSTIFIED, PART 3

by Ken White

(Editor's note: In the past two issues of The Pokey Press, we've examined various facets of desktop publishing - what it is, what you can do with it, and how you can use the capabilities of your desktop publishing software in designing a graphically-oriented document such as an advertisement or a flyer. This issue, our series on desktop publishing concludes with a look at the process of putting together a multi-page text-oriented document, such as a newsletter.)

Right-o. By now, if you've been following along with this series (and if you haven't, head on over to the birdcage, give little Tweety a slap on the beak to show him who's boss, and then pull the last two issues of The Pokey Press from their final resting place on the bottom of Tweety's cage...), you already know the basics of desktop publishing - what a good desktop publishing program should allow you to do, how you should use the capabilities of your desktop publishing software for best effect, and also some of the basic mistakes that budding desktop publishers frequently make their first time out of the gate.

You've learned how to handle graphics and text to layout a pleasing advertisement, or flyer for your social organization. But what if you're primary interest is in text-based documents - a newsletter like this one, or a doctoral thesis, or possibly even a pamphlet or book that you're publishing yourself. If that's what you want, how can you be denied. Read on, boyo (or girlo, as the case may be...)

A text-based document is a horse of a different color when it comes to layout and design. When laying out an ad or flyer, words and pictures have almost equal status. The words are important, certainly, but the graphics (and included in the concept of graphics can be the use of different text styles and sizes to make a point) are also very important since the document, by its very nature, is supposed to be eye catching.

When dealing with a document that is primarily text-based, your priorities must change. Again, an attractive, eye-catching layout is important, but you probably won't have the freedom to lay different sizes of text, and various graphics, anywhere you want them on the page (at least not and keep some sort of cohesive look to the document).

And that's where we'll take off this time around - the "look" of your document...

Pick up a couple of consecutive issues of any professionally produced magazine (and by the way, the reason I say use a professionally produced magazine as your guide is simple - these magazines are put together by professionals - men, women, children, and space aliens who are paid good money to design a "look" for a magazine, and who make sure that the magazine stays true to that look). Examine the magazine. You'll find that each issue is, more or less, pretty much the same as the last issue. The magazine probably has a variety of regular features and regular "departments" (as they're sometimes known...). Each

month, these features and departments appear in much the same format, and probably in much the same place in the magazine as well. The words (and possibly the graphics) that make up these features change, but the feature or department doesn't change. Why?

Simple enough - once you've discovered a good, working layout for your magazine (and for magazine, you can substitute any regularly-released document), you stick with it. It speeds up layout of a multi-page document (since you don't have to decide where to put things every month or whatever) and it also makes it easy for the end user (in this case, the reader) to find what he or she is looking for.

To use an easy-to-find example (easy-to-find since it's in your hand right now), take a look at The Pokey Press. Since being dry-gulched into the editorship nearly a year ago, a number of changes have been made in the basic layout, and different features of the newsletter appear in the same place every month.

• **Page 2** - On page two, you'll always find the club and newsletter information box, the president's column, and the secretary's column (when he does one...).

SEE DESKTOP PUBLISHING, PAGE 21

A LOOK AT THE NEW TOS ROMS

The 1987 revision of TOS is scheduled for release in conjunction with the new "blitter" chip. The new TOS has been upgraded to include support for the hardware blit as well as retaining the software blit functions for full compatibility with older software which relies on hardware timing (a definite no-no).

Changes in the new ROMs are:

• **RS232:** The RS232 handler has been completely rewritten. RTS/CTS handshaking now works. Baud rates 50 and 75 now work.

• **CLOCK:** Support is now included for the Mega ST's built-in, battery-backer-up realtime clock. The realtime clock is automatically used by the XBIOS gettime and setttime functions for the IKBD. The GEMDOS clock is reset from the realtime clock at the termination of every program.

• **STARTUP:** Memory clear at system startup is much faster, improving performance on multi-megabyte systems.

• **DESKTOP:** The desktop now includes a control for deactivating/activating the blitter chip. Also, the Save Desktop and Print Screen selections will request confirmation. Spurious characters are no longer written to the DESKTOP.INF file. Doing a PRINT or SHOW from the desktop will now display characters with ASCII codes above 127. SHOW and PRINT use a larger buffer now. Single drive copies now require fewer disk swaps.

• **CART:** Cartridge handling has been revised, eliminating the need for "CARTSTART" code and allowing .TOS and .TTP

SEE ROMS, PAGE 17

ST PRODUCT REVIEWS

PC:DITTO

FREEING THE IBM COMPATIBLE INSIDE THE ST

by Earle West

For so long the Atari ST community was promised a "working" PC emulator was "coming soon", that we began to wonder if it were just another piece of vaporware. Then finally a newcomer to ST software - Avant-Garde Systems - took Spring Comdex by storm, and users and reviewers alike have been singing the praises of PC-Ditto! PC-Ditto is a software based IBM-PC emulator that DOES work! No additional hardware is required to use PC-Ditto.

PC-Ditto by Avant-Garde Systems runs the most popular IBM programs on your Atari ST. Already the list of software is extensive including over 700 titles. Programs like Lotus 1-2-3, Word Perfect, WordStar, MultiMate, dBase III & III Plus, R:Base 5000, Norton Utilities, Managing your Money, Crosstalk XVI, ProComm, and Flight Simulator all run without a hitch.

PC-Ditto comes packaged in a nice memo tablet type container, the front of which lists some of the compatible IBM software titles. Included in the package is a 3.5" inch disk containing PC-Ditto, a short PC-Ditto manual, registration card, and a keyboard template.

It needs to be made clear here that PC-Ditto is an emulator and as such does NOT contain any IBM DOS (Disk Operating System)

PC DITTO: FROM THE HORSE'S MOUTH

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Since PC:Ditto is, perhaps, one of the more important products released for the Atari ST, we've decided to reprint the contents of a message left on GEnie, the online service from General Electric, by Bill Teal, part of the husband and wife team that makes up Avant Garde, makers of PC:Ditto. In this message, Mr. Teal's discussion of the planning behind, and execution of, PC:Ditto, makes fascinating reading. The message also contains a great deal of authoritative information about PC:Ditto as it is today, and as it will be in the future.)

Introduction -----

We would like to introduce ourselves: we are Avant-Garde Systems, manufacturer of pc-ditto for the Atari ST. The company is small, comprised of just two of us -- Ginny and Bill Teal. (Because we are not sure of the length of messages here on your system, we will break up our message into five parts.)

First and most importantly, we wish to thank everyone who has supported us so far on just blind faith: dealers as well as consumers. In particular, we wish to say a special thanks to those on this message base who have carried the torch on our behalf until we could get here:

Jeff Wimmer Braun Tacon Darek Mihoca(sp?)
and a million thanks to Nevin Shalit in New York City.

Piracy -- We know that some rumors abound regarding the piracy of pc-ditto and the effect on Avant-Garde. We would like to go on record and eliminate any pesky rumors you've heard. A couple of weeks ago, we began to receive calls from dealers regarding piracy of our product. Not one or two, but in our phone log, now well over a hundred; fairly well scattered across the country. This might not seem unusual in this electronic age, but we were astounded by the sheer numbers of individuals who began contacting dealers and ourselves for support and disk drives. When we originally decided to enter the retail

SEE TEAL, PAGE 18

on the disk supplied with the package. The purchase of a suitable DOS is the responsibility of the end user. It is recommended that IBM PC-DOS Version 2.0 or higher be used because of the substantially larger library of programs available for this version. You may also use Microsoft MS-DOS, Compaq MS-DOS, or Eagle MS-DOS with PC-Ditto. I would personally recommend that you use either version 3.2 or 3.3 because of device drivers (DRIVER.SYS) included in these versions that will allow you to format 3.5" floppies for 720K high-capacity 80 track format. Many non-IBM users may have difficulty with PC-DOS or MS-DOS (NO, they are NOT the same, just very similar) and the manual provided with PC-Ditto does not cover the topic in depth. I would suggest that a user unfamiliar with the world of MS-DOS invest in a guide to help you sort it all out. Two books that I can recommend include: Abacus' MS-DOS Reference Guide (\$12.95) and Microsoft Press' Running MS-DOS (\$21.95). Both guides are easy to understand, and while Abacus' guide offers detailed descriptions of commands and functions, the Microsoft Press book is more tutorial in nature, and will walk you through usage of MS-DOS commands. In order to gain full benefit from PC-Ditto it is essential that you at least learn the basics of PC/MS-DOS.

In order to get up and running with PC-Ditto it will be necessary to configure your system with the PC-MENU program included on the PC-Ditto disk. First thing to do is make a back-up of the disk included in the package. The disk is NOT copy protected (Thank you, Avant-Garde!) so back-ups are easily made, and PC-Ditto may be installed on your hard-drive. The documentation included in the package is sparse; however there are help screens throughout the menu program to help you with the set-up procedure. After you have set up the program with PC-MENU you are ready to double click on the main program PC_DITTO.PRG. The first screen you see is the program identification screen and the instruction to insert your DOS disk into drive A. You insert your IBM PC/MS-DOS disk, press the return key and voila! In just a few seconds you will be prompted to enter the date and time, and after that you are operating an IBM-PC! It's that easy.

You will find that most software written for the IBM still comes on 5.25 inch disk format. Unless you can find a way to port them over to the 3.5 inch disk format, you may need to obtain a 5.25 inch disk drive to run these programs. I would suggest that you look at the IB Drive 40 from IB Computers, 1514 S.W. Marlow Avenue, Portland, Oregon 97225, (503)297-8425. This is a drive that will read and write IBM format disks and will connect directly to your ST. IBM programs that are not copy-protected can be transferred to a 3.5 inch disk, which can be formatted to hold more data than the 360K 40 track limit of the 5.25 inch format.

IBM-PC features that are available on the ST with PC-Ditto include:

- The use of all equivalent keys on the Atari keyboard.
- Up to 703K of memory available for programs.
- Atari parallel port as LPT1.
- Atari serial port as COM1.
- Use of 3.5 inch drives for software and data storage in both 360K 40 track and 720K 80 track formats.
- Use of an optional 5.25 inch disk drive for reading and writing all standard IBM PC-DOS format disks.
- Color graphics modes for text and low, medium and high resolution graphics.
- All DOS and BIOS interrupts.
- Direct read and write to video memory.

SEE PC-DITTO, PAGE 19

ST PRODUCT REVIEWS

PUBLISHING PARTNER: TRUE DESKTOP PUBLISHING FOR THE ATARI FAITHFUL

by Ken White

As Frank Zappa said in "200 Motels", "What can I say about this elixir!!!"

But seriously, folks....

But seriously folks, Publishing Partner, from Soft Logik, is one of the more amazing programs that has appeared for the Atari ST. A perfect program? Nope. A program without its little foibles? No way. But an amazing program, none the less.

I'm not going to go on at any length about the basic requirements of a desktop publishing program; I've already covered most of the angles in the three-part article on Desktop Publishing that concludes in this issue of the Pokey Press. Instead, I'll describe how THIS particular program implements those requirements - where it is strong, where it is weak, and where its capabilities are non-existent.

THE MANUAL

The first thing that many people examine upon purchasing a piece of software is the manual. Naturally. Ya got this thing, now what the hell are ya gonna do with it....

The Publishing Partner manual is fairly-well organized, with a quick look at the program's capabilities, followed by a tutorial, followed by the rest of the information about the program, laid-out according to the order in which the various functions appear in the drop-down menus across the top of the screen. A little confusing to begin with (most manuals seem to be laid out according to capability, rather than where the capabilities lie in the menu). However, I found that once this somewhat-unusual layout was understood, it was easy enough to find what I had to find, when I had to find it (whatever that means....).

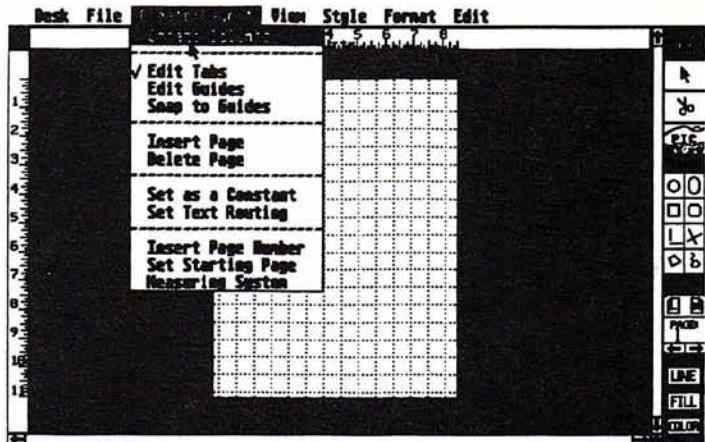
Some have complained that the manual is not particularly visual (I guess meaning that there weren't a lot of screen dumps or something). That's true. Not a lot of screen dumps. But the manual IS rather well written, and most of the writing, though not especially simplistic, is clear and simple to understand, even by someone who has NEVER dealt with desktop publishing on a computer. Personally, I'll take clear writing over lots of pictures most of the time.

Overall, one has to give Soft Logik a B+ for the Publishing Partner manual. It's not perfect, and it probably could have been laid-out in a manner a bit closer to the norm. But it'll answer your questions and help you to get started with the program.

THE PROGRAM

Of course, it's always my habit (and the habit of many I know) to try and get as far as I can in a program before digging into the manual. It's a combination of pride and impatience. Pride that I should be able to figure things out from menus, etc. Impatience in that I really don't feel like reading a thick manual (and the Publishing Partner manual is somewhat thick) before I start playing with a new piece of software. I wanna throw it into my disk drive, click an icon, and start doing something useful. So it's always a pleasure to find a program that will let me play around a bit before I have to open the manual.

Publishing Partner was (is) such a program. Now I, personally, have worked in the newspaper field before, so I have at least a passing familiarity with what one might want to do with a desktop publishing program. I'm also fairly well experienced (after a year 5-10 hours a day on the damn thing) with the Atari ST. So looking at the drop-down menus gave me a pretty good idea of the capabilities of the program, and I had a good idea of how to



proceed without benefit of manual. Someone with absolutely NO idea of the capabilities of desktop publishing software, or someone who was not especially familiar with the GEM interface (yes, Publishing Partner takes full advantage of GEM) might be able to play around a bit, but they would hardly be able to do anything really useful....

Rather than go through a list of features, I'll just guide you through the process of creating a document using Publishing Partner. This should give you an idea of what the program can do.

The first thing you (as a perspective desktop publisher....the Charles Foster Kane of your generation, perhaps...) will probably want to do is create a new document. When selecting the new document feature, you have a choice of deciding the size of the document (either a standard size (letter, legal, index or business card, and the English A4 and B5 sizes), or a user-defined size), whether the document should be single or double sided (useful in having different standard features on front/back or left/right pages in a document), and whether it should be portrait (like the Pokey Press) or landscape (like the Pokey Press turned on its side).

Once you've decided the basic features of your document, it's time to get to work. Publishing Partner makes it easy to create columns (as many as you want, the size you want (within reason, of course....five three-inch columns will not fit on paper 8 1/2 inches wide, no matter how magnificent the program), with the spacing on the page as you want it.) The default is three columns, which seems a bit on the narrow side to me - as you can see from the Pokey Press, we go 2 columns, each one-half inch from the edges of the paper, with an inch top and bottom margin and a quarter inch between columns. (a real mouthful, huh...)

However you lay-out your columns, you have the ability to put columns on EVERY page of your document, or only on selected pages (or even a page at a time, if you like...). With the columns neatly laid out, you're ready to start using Publishing Partner to its full capabilities.

Text can either be imported into the columns by using the import feature (there is also an export feature, which will take text OUT of columns and save them as an ASCII file), or can be typed into the columns, using the program as a rudimentary word processor (which is what I am doing at the moment). Although the "word processing" end of things is, indeed, a bit rudimentary, it'll probably do for many applications - between the ability to format text in the columns (using things like centering, and various kinds of text justification) and do things to that text (boldface, italics,

SEE PUBLISHING PARTNER, PAGE 20

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YOUR ONE-STOP AMIGA AND ATARI DEALER

BYTING THE HAND THAT FEEDS ME

by Ken White

BITS AND PIECES.....

"I'm in pieces...
Bits and pieces...."

So sang the Dave Clark Five some twenty-five some-odd years ago (or perhaps it was the Raiders some twenty-three some-odd years ago...) I seem to have forgotten which it is, and I don't feel like leaving my blessed keyboard to find out... (Joan Jett did a nice cover version of "Bits and Pieces" a couple of years ago) I was once thrown out of Joan Jett's Winnebago in the middle of an interview, which is, of course, another story entirely...)

And like the DC5 (or the Raiders...whatever...), my column is in bits and pieces this month. Rather than pontificate (and when I pontificate, there's more bull than papal in my Papal Bulls) on one subject this month, I've decided to pull out the old sawed-off shotgun and try the scattergun approach.

HOW I SPENT MY SUMMER VACATION

Thank you for asking. Yes, I had a very nice time. Went to Canada. Edmonton, Alberta, to be exact. Very nice city. Very clean. Very friendly people. The weather was a bit cooler than I was expecting, since it was, after all, early August, and here in beautiful, sunny, hotter than hell Florida, the temperature was...well, hotter than hell. But it was kind of like a taste of Florida winters (highs in the 60's and low 70's, lows in the 40's and 50's), and after some months in a blast furnace, it was a welcome change. I did not, however, visit any bus stations, so I can't pass along any amusing anecdotes about restroom cleanliness or the like. Sorry, Jim...

Of course, all of this has a limited amount of relevance to the subject of computing, but I was getting to that....

While in Edmonton, I had promised myself that I would try to hook up with some of the members of the Edmonton Atari group (E.A.C.H. the Edmonton Atari Computer Hobbyists), perhaps attend one of their meetings, etc. etc. etc. You know, what the out-of-town computer user always does. The universal language.

No matter where you are, don't make funny gestures while slowly mouthing "bathroom" (if you speak English real slowly, people who don't understand apparently attain some sort of instant comprehension...); instead, smile with your best goofy grin and say "Atari?" That usually does the trick. Either they take you to the blessed keyboard or put you up against the wall and shoot you.

Of course, language is not a problem in Canada (though some of the traffic laws are unexpected...as in the fact that pedestrians ALWAYS have the right-of-way...hell, officer, I thought they were doing a sequel to "Death Race 2000"...). And I WAS, finally, able to connect with the Edmonton group, in a manner of speaking....

First, unbeknownst to me, the E.A.C.H.'s main meeting was being held the night I got into town. Sure, I arrived in the middle of the afternoon. I could have made it. But I was not...well. I hadn't slept in some 36 hours or so and I got to the hotel to find that it wasn't a comfortable place to spend the evening hours, but was, instead, Motel Hell. Big, greasy guys on motorcycles usually aren't interested in discussing ramdisks or the latest cool piece of PD software. Neither are women who apparently stepped out of the seamier parts of "Leisure Suit Larry in the Land of the Lounge Lizards".

My state during the early hours of my visit to Edmonton are perhaps best described as "barely-controlled hysteria". Had I KNOWN that the Edmonton group was meeting that night, in the safe, well-lit, warm, comforting confines of the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology, I still wouldn't have gone to the meeting. No point in making a complete spectacle of myself.

I spent one night in Motel Hell, then moved right on out and into a motel that had a cowboy bar attached, but was at least pleasant enough. That solved that problem.

But I still didn't know when or where the Edmonton group met. I'd tried, in the weeks before I left, to find a GOOD number for the E.A.C.H. BBS, so I could get the information before I left. I ended up with about three different numbers, each (so to speak) of which was wrong. Even the sysop at the National Capital Atari Users Group in Ottawa had the wrong number. Ah, well...

Computer stores, I muttered to myself. There must be computer stores, and undoubtedly, if I check enough computer stores, I will find someone who knows when and where E.A.C.H. meets. Yes, there were computer stores. Lots of them. Chain stores and independents. Almost all of them in malls.

If you've never been to Edmonton, you have to understand one thing about the city - it is full of the nicest malls this humble shopper has ever seen. I mean NICE. Of course, there's the West Edmonton Mall, the world's largest mall, complete with amusement park (inside), iceskating/hockey rink (inside), water park (including dolphin shows, shark exhibits, a full-size version of the Santa Maria, a huge wave pool (complete with beach and ultraviolet rays so you can cop a tan), and a huge water slide) (inside also), and an aviary (inside). All that and a zillion stores.

But the West Edmonton Mall isn't the only nice mall in the city. There are at least a dozen others, spread all around, all enclosed, almost all two levels, with fountains and art exhibits and all kinds of wild stuff. I mean, we're talking SERIOUS malls, here.

The rational, I imagine, is pretty simple - winter comes VERY early to Edmonton, bringing lots of snow and subzero temperatures. And it stays VERY late. People, naturally, don't want to spend a lot of time outside when the weather is cold enough to freeze (fill in your own expletive). So a onestop

SEE BYTING, PAGE 16

GOOD SEC'S (FROM PAGE 2)

Vice President Brett Cramer and a friend demonstrated PC-Ditto from Avante-Guard systems. This demo was very well done and held the interest of those in attendance. Watching Norton Utilities tell us that the ST, running PC-Ditto, was an IBM-XT was quite funny. The product worked flawlessly.

And if that wasn't enough for one night, the game Midi-Maze (a pre-release, demo version) was demonstrated. Jim Woodward and Jerry Horanoff played against each other. Jim may be a good President, but Jerry is a terror in those mazes. This program also looks like it will be a winner.

At the Executive Committee meeting the next Tuesday the first topic of discussion was the Bulletin Board. It seems that a bad I/O cable was causing some trouble and that the password file was trashed. The password list had to be restarted. Jim apologized but said that it wasn't his fault.

After a lengthy discussion, it was decided that the position of Newsletter Editor will become an elected position during the next elections.

Then the SUNATARI '87 show was discussed, and the major thrust was making sure that everything runs smoothly. It appears that it will.

Finally, the details of the auction at the September meeting was discussed. Al Tressel will once again be the auctioneer.

That's all for this time around. Don't forget to turn in your Club Survey forms so that I can get the club expert program rolling. See you all at the meetings.♦

SUNATARI '87, NOVEMBER 21-22, WPB, FL
BE THERE OR BE SQUARE.....



JIM'S CORNER

by Jim Woodward

SOME INTERESTING NEWS

If you are in the Atari specific magazine business, here is some interesting news. On the Club BBS, I ran a vote poll to see which Atari magazines the callers read. Here are the results:

ANTIC	19	ANALOG	15
ATARI EXPLORER	8	ST WORLD	5
ST APPLICATIONS	4	Start	2
ST LOG	2	ST USER	1
ST BUSINESS	0	OTHER	0

To me, these numbers show that the ST only magazines aren't doing as well as those who serve both the XL/XE and ST markets. It could also mean that the ST only magazines don't have the same distribution channels that those top three do. (Editor's note: Jim fails to consider that the club board is run on an 8-bit, and that there is little on the club board to attract the average ST user - those of us who are there have ulterior motives...and God knows I never check the vote poll...)

I was also surprised to see Analog do so well considering their problems with their printer. The July/August issue finally hit the magazine rack at the B. Dalton's in the Boynton Beach Mall during the last week in August. What makes that strange is that several other computer magazines on the stand at the same time were voted for October.

ATARI BUYS FEDERATED

It seems that a few weeks ago, Atari U.S. Corporation bought a chain of electronics stores called Federated for \$67.3 million. This is not to be confused with the Federated that runs large department stores. Federated had 65 stores in 4 states (including California) and sold televisions, video cassette recorders, video cameras, stereos, and rented video cassettes.

Notice something? No video game systems. No computers. Is Atari going to add a certain brand of video game systems and computers into those stores? You better believe it. Imagine, what a great way to get your products to the people.

Now for the big problem. What if you own a computer store down the street from one of these Atari/Federated stores? How competitive can you be price wise? While Atari can put them into their stores at cost, the independent store has to deal with distributors, thus raising the price he has to pay for the machine. Then the independent must add a few dollars for himself, and then you have the price you pay for your computer from him. But why pay him when you can go down the street and pay less, and get it straight from Atari. At least that way you are guaranteed that if there is a problem, you are going to be satisfied. You may not get that from the independent store.

I'm no big genius when it comes to money (remember, I'm the guy who said not to buy Atari stock), but I think that things could be a little sticky in those states where this situation occurs. We'll just have to wait to see what happens.

FINAL WRAP-UP

Well, things seem to be getting real interesting in the Atari world again. The new Atari products should be hitting dealers' shelves by the time you see this. The Amiga 2000 should be hitting the shelves at the same time. (Gonna be a great battle. "my computer is better than yours" stuff is also gonna start

up again.) The SUNATARI '87 show will be just over a month away. The Atari advertising campaign should be getting started. And the holidays are getting close. Things are really gonna be interesting.

SPECIAL NOTE TO THE PIG

I love you and miss you. Keep those cards and letters coming. See you real soon! Hugs and kisses..

CENTER SEAT (FROM PAGE 2)

pyromaniac in a dynamite factory. Hope we don't get sued! (For those of you who are new to the club, I founded the newsletter, way back before there were ST's and desktop publishing programs.)

A CHANGE IN THE WAY WE DO THINGS...

Due to the show we are making a few changes in the way we do things. Instead of the way we did it last year (and according to the club bylaws), holding officer nominations at the September and October meetings with the elections at the November meeting and the new officers take over in January, we will do it differently. (Did you get all that?) This year, we will have nominations during the October meeting, speeches during the November meeting, and the elections at the December meeting and the new officers take over at the January meeting. (Is that clear to you?) This just makes things easier on all involved.

ALL THINGS CONSIDERED...

....this hasn't been a bad year for the club. The BBS has had its usual problems with the disk drives, but we have added a new 300/1200 baud modem. The meetings have been pretty good, as long as I don't show the slides from my trip to and from Iowa. We have had demos on desktop publishing, telecommunications, PC-Ditto, Midi Maze, games, and more. Ken White took the newsletter from a good one to a great one. And everyone should thank him for the time and effort that he has put into it. We started off with a big drop in membership, but have since grown beyond what we had last year. The benefits of membership are better this year than last, and that may have helped. Then, I pushed for the Atari Expo, now known as SUNATARI '87. I knew that it would mean a lot of work, and that lots of time would be involved. The Executive Committee, and rightly so, made sure that the commitment from the members was there. This kept things from turning into a disaster. Luckily, the members offered their time and efforts. The show will be a success and help the club be a better one next year. Yep, this hasn't been a bad year for the club. I hope that you all agree. See you all later..

**FOR THE LATEST
IN SUNATARI '87 NEWS
CALL
THE ATARI COMPUTER CLUB
OF THE PALM BEACHES
BBS
305-641-5372**

300/1200 BAUD

24 HOURS A DAY

BYTING (FROM PAGE 14)

shopping kind of place, a place where there's enough to do to fill an entire day, is certainly an attractive concept. Anyway, enough about malls in general. Let's talk about computer stores in malls.

Almost every mall I went into had at least two computer stores. And what did my eyes fall upon in each of these computer stores? Atari computers. Yes, indeed. The stores invariably had an ST set up, running demos. Some of them also had 8-bit machines set up and running demos. But the clear hardware push seemed to be on for the ST line.

Software was a different story - almost all of the stores had a nice selection of both 8-bit and ST software, including all of the recent titles, as well as some of the golden oldies. There were sales going on for Atari software and hardware too - and not just the "let's clear this crap out of here to make more shelf space for Commodore, Apple, or IBM software". Nope, most of the computer stores seemed to be supporting Atari.

I managed to get my hands on a copy of the E.A.C.H. newsletter (R.E.A.C.H.), and found that I had, indeed, missed the main meeting. However, the ST SIG meeting was coming up the following week, so I made plans to attend.

Edmonton also seems to be a good town for computer-oriented publications, especially FREE computer-oriented publications. INPUT is a monthly newspaper, supported, apparently, through advertising sales, which covers a wide range of machines, including the Atari line. Quite impressive. I also picked up a copy of The Software Review, a publication devoted, oddly enough, to software reviews. It gives fairly decent coverage of the Atari line, as well as Macintosh, C64, and Amiga software. The issue I saw was only issue number three, but it seems to show a lot of promise.

Anyway, I made a couple of calls, talked to some of the guys from E.A.C.H., and finally got to the ST SIG meeting. Of course, the folks in Edmonton have been having a slight problem - the same people bring the computers to each club function. So those same people had finally decided enough was enough - they weren't bringing the computers, and if nobody else brought the computers, then there weren't gonna BE any computers.

Guess what....there weren't any computers in evidence at the ST SIG meeting. Not a one. We just sat around, talking about software, about hardware, about fixes (look for a fix for the 1040 internal drive in an upcoming issue of the Pokey Press...), and so on, and so forth. It was interesting enough to me, but my lady friend was somewhat overwhelmed by the conversation, being only a couple of days into the land of the 8-bits. As she put it, it was as if "they were speaking another language". I brought a pile of copies of the August Pokey Press and they seemed to like it (of course, would they have told me that they hated it, even if they did? Would they be THAT cruel and heartless to a visitor from a...uh...faraway land? I mean, I would be that cruel and heartless, but one expects better from people other than me...).

So what can one say about Atari computing in Canada? (At least Western Canada...okay, at least Edmonton....)

It seems to be heavily in evidence, and the prices (at least those I saw) didn't seem terribly out of line, especially considering the US/Canadian dollar exchange rate. Blank disk prices were a bit high, and software in some outlets was a little more expensive than I would have expected it to be. I also did hear a few horror stories about incredibly high hardware prices from some of the E.A.C.H. members I spoke with. But overall, it was very nice to see Atari hardware and software in reasonable abundance. I wish the same abundance was evident in malls on THIS side of the border.

SUNATARI '87

I assume there's a fair amount of information in this month's Pokey Press about the upcoming SunAtari '87 show (the reason I say "I assume..." is because it's the last week of August, I'm writing for the October issue, and this is the first thing being written for the October Pokey Press so I can't, with 100% accuracy, state exactly WHAT the hell is in the rest of this

issue...). Therefore, I'm not gonna bore you with more of the same old stuff - ohhhhhh, look at who's gonna be here, look at what we're gonna have, look what you're gonna be able to do the weekend of November 21-22 (you lucky reader you).

Instead, I'll just say that we're planning a massive issue of the Pokey Press for the show, including profiles of some of the vendors who will be coming, information on some of the new products we'll hopefully be seeing, and big bunches of other stuff as well. We haven't quite decided when this issue will first be distributed (whether it'll be slightly before or at the meeting prior to the show, or whether we will just wait until the show itself). We WILL be printing about 4-5,000 copies of that particular issue, so there should be enough to go around.

There will, more than likely, also be a small program for the show itself (we're still working out the details on this one, kidz...), which will include some basic information and a floorplan. No promises on this one, but I'm pushing for it....it'll be something to pass down to the grandchildren, etc., and how could we deny that to our showgoing public.

ELECTION ACTION

Yes, elections will be coming up for club officers in the next couple of months. What do I care, you ask..... Well, other than the fact that I would certainly hope to see an Executive Committee as committed as the current one, I will (barring unforeseen circumstances, acts of God, and/or extremely heavy payoffs) have a personal stake in the elections.

At the August Officer's Meeting, I pushed for, and managed to get, a slight change in the setup of the Newsletter Committee. No, the position of Editor hasn't been uncreated (you should be so lucky...). Instead, the position of Editor will become an elected one.

It was my position that the membership as a whole should decide who edits this rag, since it IS the physical manifestation of the club to non-members a representative of the Atari Computer Club of the Palm Beaches, forcing its way into mailboxes across the nation and around the world. And I felt that the membership should determine who will be at the helm. I managed to convince, through threats and an intimidating butterfly knife, a majority of the officers that an elected Editor would be a peachy idea, and it was made so through a vote. (As Yul Brynner said in THE TEN COMMANDMENTS, "So let it be written. So let it be done.")

SEE BYTING, NEXT PAGE

BOB (FROM PAGE 5)

and the church is essentially run by Rev. Ivan Strang (who has the longest continuous membership in the church of any member, and who has the rights to all names and images connected with the church) and Dr. Philo Drummond, who handles the public relations end of things. And the church continues to flourish.

A SAVIOR FOR ALL SEASONS...

SubGenii are not the type to push their literature or sell flowers at airports. We believe in the concept of short duration personal saviors to avoid the possibility of pushing our beliefs on others. What is a short duration personal savior, you ask....

Well....a true Sub can fix his or her personal savior as anyone or anything that he or she is impressed with at the moment, according to the need of the now. Personal demons can be fixed in the same way. This allows both a Sub's personal saviors and personal demons to be replaced quickly. And anything that can be so quickly and easily replaced can hardly be palmed off on somebody else - if its no longer valid to the Sub, why would it be presented to somebody else.

As for how the founder of us got into the ST, obviously there are a few SubGenii high up over at Atari. I'm glad...

And remember.....

WATCH OUT FOR PINK BOYS!!!

WTING (FROM PREVIOUS PAGE)

Soooooo...come November/December, you'll be in a position to use whose ravings you wish to read in the editor's column of newsletter. Perhaps you even think that it should be YOUR ravings printed herein. In any case, I think that it's yet another in a series of positive moves the current Executive Committee has made regarding the newsletter over the past year or so.

MANY THANKS TO...

...Jim "Jim-boy" Woodward, who shouldered some of the heavy load for last month's newsletter while I vacationed. He did a good job with what I left him (hey, I got a lot of it done before I left; anyway, you REALLY didn't think that I would just...turn it over to somebody else and say "Make it easy on yourself..." Not this boy. I did what I could, then loaned my whole damn system to Jim so that he could commune with the blessed Publishing Partner and the blessed NEC P6....), and I think we should all immediately, wherever we are, whatever we might be doing, give Jim a mighty-big hand. (His hands are, after all, a bit on the small side, and he could probably use at least one big hand for those hard-to-reach spots...) Yowzah, yowzah, yowzah.... Cough, cough, cough. Thank you, Jim. And now, in the center ring....

I'd also like to extend my thanks to all those others who made the September issue of the Pokey Press an easier task than it would have been if they hadn't helped out with the September issue of the oh help me I am lost in this sentence and left my sentence map in Canada when I was there and I don't know what am going to...

There. Got out of that one with the help of a couple of dots. Anyway, thanks to Jim Woodward, Walt Williams, Al Tressel, and Albert X for contributions, Jim Woodward for editorial assistance and editorial matter (matter is a medical term for what infected hands are full of I might add...not that Jim's contributionsforget it....), Al Tressel for advertising, Mark Cantrell and dy Wrenn for graphics (including the amazing SunAtari '87 logo), and Victor Abreu for all the printing work (which is, of course, courtesy of Ellison Graphics by way of Victor...)

I am tired now and will be going to bed. Well, maybe I'll wait until I get home from work.

Goodnight..

NEXT MONTH IN THE POKEY PRESS



• COMPLETE SUNATARI '87 COVERAGE

- UP-TO-THE-MINUTE SHOW NEWS
- VENDOR PROFILES
- INSIDE STORIES OF INTRIGUE AND TREACHERY
- AND SO MUCH MORE YOU'LL BE SCREAMIN' FOR MERCY



ROMS (FROM PAGE 9)

programs. Lower case letters will now be accepted and passed to an application from the "Open Application ... Parameter" box.

•AES: The AES will now send repeat clicks if the mouse button is held down on the arrow or page controls of a window, which lets a window smooth scroll. The AES underscore bug is now fixed. APPL_TPLAY and APPL_TRECORD now work. The limit of 30 characters on a line in an alert box is now rigidly enforced.

•MOUSE: The mouse redraw can now be set to XOR mode. The system will return after a single click if this is what was requested.

•DMA: The DMA bus can now have more than one device attached at powerup time, without any special software.

•FLOPPY: The floppy read/write code checks for more errors now. In prior versions, the system would not report a CRC error under certain circumstances; now it will. This hurts some copy protection schemes. The format of the floppy disk has been skewed from track to track to improve disk speed; the XBIOS supports this by using -1 for the skew value and placing a pointer to a one word per sector skew table in the previously unused longword.

•VDI: The VDI will now draw arcs with small angles.

•BIOS: Character out routines are much faster.

•BLITTER: Automatic blitter chip support is included in line-A and VDI calls. The extended inquire will report a larger performance factor than before, allowing applications to check for the presence of the blitter. A new XBIOS call has been added to check for the blitter and to activate or deactivate it. The bit is not reentrant -- line-A and VDI should not be called from within an interrupt.

•REGISTER: The registers D0, D1, D2, A0, A1, A2 have always been forfeit when a trap call was made. Now the demise of these occurs under more conditions than before.

•MEMORY: Slightly more RAM is used by the system. Programs that were close to the edge on a 520ST may no longer fit.

•VARIABLE: Most undocumented system variables have been moved. You were warned!

NOTES AND WARNINGS:

1. Some programs depend on the OS always being at \$FC0000. This is *not* cast in stone and will probably change soon. To find the OS header, use the pointer "sysbase" as documented.

2. The 4 megabyte ST puts the screen near the end of accessible RAM. Sloppy programs that have been writing past the end of the screen will give bus errors if they do so on the 4 meg ST..

TEAL (FROM PAGE 10)

marketplace, we took into consideration that some piracy would occur. This, like similar events in other industries, goes with the territory. But, it still hurt our feelings, after we tried to give the market a good product, at a good price, a free update, and to offer to listen to the market so as to improve the product and service in the future.

So, are we going out of business or do we plan to roll over? No. Thank goodness for those of you who supported us. You have shown us that the entire Atari market is not corrupt. Only, that it sometimes seems so. If you continue your support, and your friends continue, then we will work even harder to earn your respect, to provide you the best support we can and keep all the promises we've made. Maybe, if by providing great support, more updates, and maintaining good prices, most people who want the product will ultimately want the real thing.

Support policy -- Please send in your registration cards. Many manufacturers tell us that only 20 to 30 percent of these cards are ever returned. We are providing a free update. This will be the only way we will know where and to whom to send an update. Also, if you call us, we can not help you if your card is not on file. Lastly, we are making the next update free, as a way to entice you to tell us what you think. The next update will contain enhancements, rather than bug fixes. But, we want your input. We do want the product to be useful to you. So, call, write, or send a message to us here.

About once a week we will visit this system, to reply to your questions. Usually, on Sunday.

Since we view this medium as a technical support system, you may find that from time to time you ask us questions which we may not respond to. We will not give our opinion, speculate about the future, nor enter into debates of a non-technical nature publicly. Please send us E-mail, if you wish to covering other ancillary topics. Because this system costs money, we want to save those who come here time and aggravation, instead of cover a lot of irrelevant ifs, maybes, and should haves. It appears that

this professional attitude is already in place here...we would just like to continue it. Thanks.

Finally, many of you may find it hard obtaining pc-ditto at your local dealer. We are working on this. We have one phone line. We are installing others. Also, we did not expect the overwhelming rush to buy this product. We had anticipated a slow summer in which to build up our credibility and advertise to dealers. Instead, you surprised us. Have patience. We won't forget you.

By the way, our address is:

Avant-Garde Systems
381 Pablo Point Drive
Jacksonville, Florida 32225
(904) 221-2904

a dealer order number is coming shortly

Design of pc-ditto -----

1. The Atari monochrome monitor (which we refer to henceforth as the Black and white or B/W) is not supported in production release version 2.0. Please do not buy the system if you have only the B/W monitor; pc-ditto will not work.

There has been some confusion over whether the documentation or the outside packaging is correct. The "requirements" on the outside back of the packaging is correct. The B/W monitor support will be included in the first update. We make no apologies for our initial decision. Unfortunately, this decision excludes about 20 percent of the U.S. market (according to Richard Frick and Sig Hartman at Atari). Quite simply, we did not have sufficient time and resources to implement and test the monitor. Do we want to exclude this market? No. We are probably losing money right now. But, any manufacturer has to weigh opportunity costs of decisions. Our cost was to not support B/W monitor, or delay announcement of the product by 3 to 6 months. We knew the window of opportunity for launching

SEE TEAL, NEXT PAGE

520 ST

WHY SEARCH FOR
MISPLACED ITEMS?

USE THE
LOCATOR
TO FIND ANY ITEM!

1040 ST

RASCOM PRESENTS
THE LOCATOR
(C) 1987

\$17.50 DISK PPD.

RASCOM
22128 Newkirk Ave.
Carson, California
90745

Catagorize items by Area, Index, Room, Furniture, Item, Remark, Purchase date, Quantity owned, Cost, and Value. Multkey search will easily find any item.

1500 records capacity to handle any household.

Memory-based processing -- extremely fast!!! Output available for screen and/or printer for permanent records. Tracking of cost versus values is also supported via a mini spreadsheet.

Powerful Search, Sort, Update, Delete full-featured GEM database. Complete file capabilities (Save, New, Old Delete) without returning to the desktop. File boxes, drop down menus, built-in help screens make for rapid data handling. Get organized now!!!

Also Available
THE CATALOGGER
COIN/STAMP
Specialized DATABASE
\$17.50 disk ppd.

TEAL (FROM PREVIOUS PAGE)

product was this summer for both U.S. and European sales. It later would most likely mean missing targets for advertising promotions during the "back-to-school" and "Holiday season" buying periods. Approximately 40 percent of the microcomputer sales are made during these periods.

That is why we officially state the B/W monitor support will be in the first update. Furthermore, we have been told by a major magazine reviewer regarding our product: we made the wisest decision. Had we chosen to initially support the B/W monitor, most people would have said "Ahhhhh. Color is impossible." Instead, psychologically, implementing color makes people think B/W is simple. (Well, we wouldn't go quite as far as to say, simple. Just that it is about the same). In any case, there is one other rule we have about products. They are tested.

Should we prematurely release an untested product into the market, you would have to wait just about as long to get an update to fix it, should it be a disaster. We prefer your wrath now, and will work harder to recover your faith, when we release a solidly tested product. In the first instance, we destroy something we can never quite recover: your confidence in us and our product.

2. 80-track 5.25" drives -- not currently supported to read 40-track media (even if just to transfer data). We are working on a simple, utility which will get the job done under DOS. This will be out shortly. If enough need is voiced for this, we can always make a "hardware" switch, later.

3. Programs on our certified list -- my wife and I have limited financial resources. We tried to select DOS applications which have widespread appeal. Our most objective scorecard of the most popular programs is the list of top 40 IBM programs sold by the distributors: Softsel, Ingram, and Micro D. We will continue to update this list about monthly; here, and with a list to dealers. If your favorite program is not here, that does not mean it will not work. But, like many compatibles, we are not perfect. (That's we sell through dealers.. so you can try before you buy).

As we fix bugs and make other improvements, many non-working programs may start running. And, we appreciate all the calls you make regarding which do run. Please understand, our official list is only updated when we have tested the product ourselves. We make this policy because if you call with a problem, we can duplicate it (in most cases). For you to rely on someone else's word is less than professional for us, since we have to stand behind our product.

4. We never realized there would be such a debate over the poor little mouse. It certainly makes sense that if a mouse is attached, and free, that a product support it. Well, when we surveyed the market to determine what dealers and consumers wanted, we were told "IBM PC XT compatibility." So, there is no mouse on a stock PC XT. Two, most of the programs on the market directly do not support any mouse at all. What you will find is when you purchase a mouse, it will include two kinds of software: a mouse driver -- which knows how to talk to the mouse hardware; and applications interface software -- which is usually customized designed for the most popular applications, such as Lotus 1-2-3, and includes the pull-down menus, and the like.

We intend to provide the driver. And, a generic mouse which generates cursor keystrokes, with maybe the right button to generate a user definable key (say, carriage return). Now, either will be selectable from our menu. At this time, unless you already own IBM mouse interface software, from Microsoft, Logitech, Maynard, etc, then you may end up using Generic mouse. The cost of developing interface software is very large. Any one looking for a low cost market to develop for, here you are. Of course, there are some public domain mice programs, such as PMM (poor mans mouse), available. We will keep you posted as we go.

5. There is no support for the European keyboards and timers. That version will be released to European distributors this summer.

The new blitter may help some screen updates, but we don't

know. Little information about them, and the machines they will be supported on, is currently available.

7. Megas with 2 and 4 Meg memories, as well as upgraded 1.5 to 4 Meg STs will be supported by PC-Ditto.

8. Color text support -- One IBM CGA mode, 80 column text, permits 16 color backgrounds and 8 color characters. The Atari ST only supports 4 colors in 80 column mode. We DO allow you to choose which 4 colors. Unfortunately, this is one limitation placed on us by hardware design. However, we have not found this to be very limiting. Try it yourself, before discounting the ST. Also, the other CGA modes are supported fully. Therefore, there is no loss of graphic color or resolution capability.

NEXT MONTH: BILL TEAL CONTINUES WITH A DOCUMENTING OF KNOWN BUGS IN VERSION 2.0 OF PC:DITTO, AND ANSWERS SOME OF THE MOST FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT PC:DITTO

PC DITTO (FROM PAGE 10)

HOW WELL DOES PC-DITTO WORK?

Well, in spite of all the hype and hoopla, PC-Ditto is NOT quite as fast as a 4.77 mHz PC. I have a real problem here because my personal PC-XT clone runs at 8 mHz, and for me the difference in speed is quite noticeable. But trying to be objective I ran Norton Utilities' performance index, and PC-Ditto achieved a .3 rating relative to a genuine IBM PC-XT. Now in all fairness to PC-Ditto, there are speed-up utilities included on the program disk that will significantly speed up on-screen I/O and buffer the keyboard, and therefore make the program operate at an acceptable speed. As far as compatibility is concerned.. PC-Ditto is an amazing product which will run almost anything IBM! There are limitations however, and to the author's credit he spells them out in the documentation. For instance IBM BASIC or BASIC-A will NOT run because IBM has part of their BASIC code in ROM. However, GW BASIC, COMPAQ BASIC, and TRUE BASIC will work. Other languages such as Turbo Pascal, Microsoft C, and Microsoft Macro Assembler will also work with PC-Ditto.

UPDATES AND CUSTOMER SUPPORT

The first update of the program is included within the price of the program so I strongly suggest you send in your registration card as soon as you can. This update should allow the use of the SM 124 Atari Monochrome monitor. At first the support number was constantly busy but I suspect that this situation has been corrected. Also, Avant-Garde Systems has become a member of both CompuServe, and GENIE, and have been placing updated listings of programs that will work with PC-Ditto.

ADVANTAGES

• PC-Ditto will allow the end user to run IBM software titles with NO additional investment in hardware.

• There is a huge library of programs available for the IBM-PC, from commercial products to shareware/freeware titles to public domain programs, the variety of software is staggering!

• Copy protection pits the publisher's greed against the privateer's greed, and fortunately Avant-Garde Systems has opted not to place the honest user in the middle. PC-Ditto is NOT copy protected, so legitimate back-ups may be made, and hard-drive users are not penalized.

DISADVANTAGES

• You must learn PC/MS-DOS in order to really maximize the potential of PC-Ditto.

• Software packages for the IBM tend to be more expensive than equivalent software for the ST, especially in the business

SEE PC-DITTO, PAGE 22

PUBLISHING PARTNER (FROM PAGE 11)

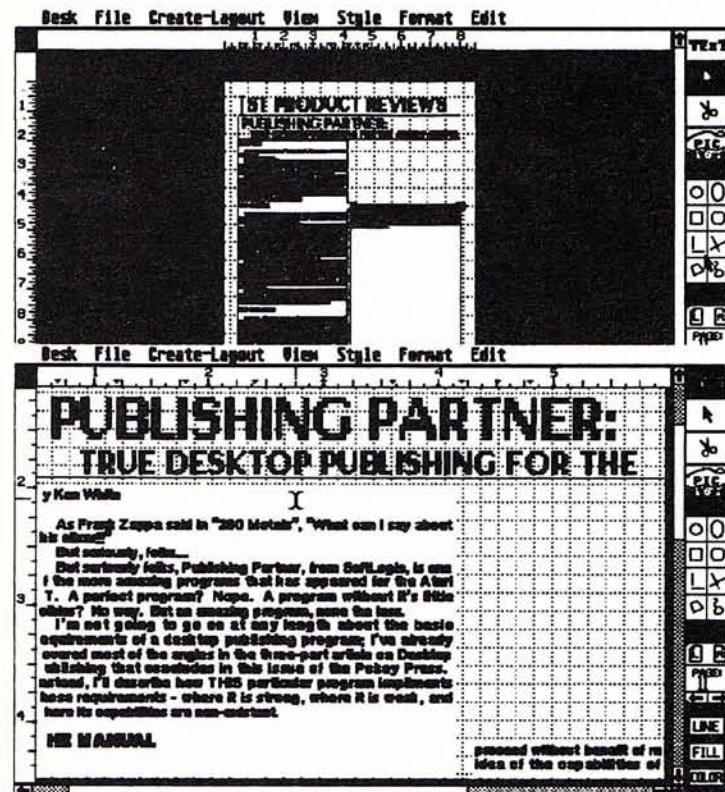
underlines, etc.) plus a search and replace feature, you'll probably be able to do a great deal of your text work right inside Publishing Partner). The import feature works rather well (though I understand that it won't import text over 32K in length), but you have to watch what you're importing - Publishing Partner is looking for straight ASCII files, and nothing else. Importing text directly from a program with a non-ASCII format like that of First Word or Word Writer can be trouble, unless you've saved the file as an ASCII file. And files that have been downloaded from various BBS services can also give a new user a few problems, since they frequently contain carriage returns in odd places - odd places that will throw off the format of your document completely if you import them as is.

However, Matt Rattcliff (of Analog/Delphi fame) has written a short accessory, called the Importer, that will strip all carriage returns out of a document in preparation for importing it into Publishing Partner. It's not 100% effective (you still need to do some manual formatting on almost any document that you might import into the program), but it does knock a difficult task down to something manageable.

Once you import text (or type it in) you can cause that text to flow from column to column, either automatically (which is a real labor saver, but which doesn't give you much choice of where that text will ultimately end up...) or manually (where you, yourself, say "Okay, the text in this column will continue in that column.")

So you've got your text into columns. Now what?

First of all, how are you going to look at the text. As the accompanying illustrations show, you can look at your page in a number of different ways. Unfortunately, the more you see, the



harder it is to read. The full page view command is just fine when you're getting an overview of what the page is going to look like, but is essentially useless when trying to actually see what is written on that page.

Of course, the program provides for other views (ranging from full width (good for centering things) to actual size (good to get an true idea of how big graphics and such will be when printed out) to multiple page (two pages, side by side - excellant to get

an idea of how a two-page spread will look). And then there's the user-defined scale.

The user-defined scale allows the user to, as you might imagine, define the scale at which the page will be viewed. That scale can range from 15% (rather small, if you get my drift) to 999% (a bit large - each word fills the page...). However, the REAL use for the user-defined scale is in the ability to allow you to set your view according to the size of the type you're using. The program is set so that 12 point (12 72nds of an inch - about a 6th of an inch high) text is the default value for writing to the screen - in other words, you can set your text to whatever size you wish (from 3 point to 72 point - a 26th of an inch high to an inch high), but the text will appear most quickly on the screen if it's 12 point text. (also, working in the smaller text sizes would make it a bit difficult to read what you were typing at actual or near-actual size) With the user-defined scale, you're able to set the text ON THE SCREEN to 12 point, regardless of the size it will be when printed out. This allows your screen to update quickly, and makes the text ON SCREEN large enough to work with comfortably.

So, there you are - typing in text from within Publishing Partner or using text that you've imported from another source (presumably a word processor or downloaded text file). What how can you do to make that text stand out?

Of course, as mentioned above, you can change the size from real small to real tall. But Publishing Partner allows an enormous number of other text-related options. Want it bold? No problem. How about slanting like a drunken sailor. A mouse-click away.... You can, of course, underline your text. Or you can double-underline it.... You can place text that has been struck through (useful, I guess, for contract forms, etc.) *Vaq lon cnu tmlu vlon text nbaide qomu ss well (ou poli)*

All of these various text options, plus a half dozen more, are available to the desktop publisher using Publishing Partner. Certainly most of these options are useful only in very specific circumstances, but it's also certainly nice to know that they're available should you find yourself in one of those very specific circumstances.

What about graphics? Publishing Partner allows you two different kinds of graphics - those you import from other art-related programs, and those you draw yourself using the limited graphics-creation capabilities of the program.

Publishing Partner allows you to make a variety of shapes (circles, squares, ovals, etc.) as well as straight lines. You can also use the mouse for free-hand drawing. The lines that comprise these shapes can be of various types, sizes, and styles, and any shape you draw can be filled with a variety of fills (basically patterns), including a user-defined fill. It's hardly possible to describe the "drawing" capabilities as anything but minimal, but they DO provide the necessary shapes and capabilities most used in desktop publishing. If ya need to include some real pitchers in your document...

Draw 'em with Degas. Or Neochrome. Or convert Mac pictures into Degas format with PicSwitch. Or Amiga pictures. Or 8-bit pictures. Publishing Partner allows the importation of pictures in either Degas, Neochrome, or Tiny format. And with a utility like PicSwitch (a public domain picture conversion utility), almost the entire world of computer art becomes available for your Publishing Partner documents. Using a picture is as simple as importing the picture from the separate picture screen, putting a rubberband box around it, moving it to the buffer, and then moving it from the buffer to your document. The newly-added picture can be sized according to your needs and placed where ever you want it.

With the complete text-formatting and layout capabilities, plus the ability to import graphics in all popular ST formats, creating a document in words and pictures is a joy with Publishing Partner.

PRINTING IT OUT

Of course, all of this capability is fine and good. But what have SEE PUBLISHING PARTNER, PAGE 22

DESKTOP PUBLISHING (FROM PAGE 9)

- Page 3 - On page three, you'll always find the lead story of a newsletter - the cover story. This page may also contain sidebar stories on the same subject.
- Page 5 - On page five, you'll always find the second major story in the issue. If it's a short story, or if there's additional major stories, you might find more than one story beginning on page five.
- Page 7-8 - On these pages, you'll find material aimed directly at 8-bit users. Usually this consists of product reviews, but there can also be 8-bit specific articles as well.
- Page 9 - On page nine, the ST section of The Pokey Press begins. The first ST feature is called ST Notes, and usually consists of an article of some sort aimed at ST users specifically. There may also be additional ST specific stories starting on this page.
- Page 10-11 - On these pages, you'll find ST Product reviews - hardware and software.
- Page 14 - On page 14 (which, with a 24 page newsletter, is the page following the center section), you'll find the editor's column and any overflow from the secretary's column.
- Page 15 - On page fifteen, you'll find Jim's Corner, plus any overflow from the president's column.

After page fifteen, the newsletter is filled with the overflow from articles until you reach the last two inside pages of the newsletter (in this case, pages 22 and 23). That's where you'll see our monthly humor column, The Laughing I/O Port. The Laughing I/O Port normally takes the final inside page, though occasionally (like last month), when we have more than one piece of humor (such as it is), we go to a second page.

There, now that I've bored you with about a hundred words of explanation about the layout and look of The Pokey Press, lemme tell ya WHY I bored ya...

What I've just described is the style of The Pokey Press. It's a liberate style, thought out before it was instituted. I won't go the rational for why things are where they are - that would ALLY bore the hell out of you. But I will say that there are reasons why things are done this way, and, more importantly, why they are done this way EVERY ISSUE.

Consistency. Effectiveness. We've found a way we feel is effective in getting the information out to you, the reader. And we're remaining consistant in our way of doing it, to reinforce the effectiveness of the way its laid out.

So, if you're planning on doing your own text-based document, you're going to want to find your own effective way of presenting information, and then remain consistant in the way you present that information. You can present the most useful and interesting information imaginable, but if the layout stinks, the information will be ignored or overlooked.

That, essentially, is the first major consideration when putting together a text-based document - come up with a "look" for your document, and then stick to that look. It'll make your job much easier (especially if the document is one that is issued regularly - monthly, bi-monthly, weekly, or even daily), since you won't have to figure out where things should go every time you lay out a new issue.

It'll also make things easier on your readers - readers are a peculier lot, and they seem to gravitate to certain specific features of a regular publication. If those specific features are in the same place every issue, the reader won't have to go hunting for what he or her wants to read. If thosr specific features ARE NOT in the same place every issue, and if the reader must constantly hunt through the whole publication, looking for what he or she wants to read, that reader is not going to think very well of you as an editor, publisher, or whatever high-minded title you have lavished on yourself (I tried to have them make me Emperor of All I Survey here at the Pokey Press, but the newsletter committee wouldn't go along with it and I had to settle for editor...).

The best way to do this, especially when it's your first iment, is to lay it out on paper first. Make drawings of each e, sit back, and say, "Okay, this will go here, this will go ure..." etc. The actual layout will go MUCH faster if you already

know where things are going to go.

After you've decided on the, for lack of a better term, skeleton of your document, it's time to start laying the...well, using the current analogy I'm trapped in....laying the flesh on the document. The words and pictures that you'll use to get your point across. Again, you'll want to use the building blocks of your document (text and graphics) as effectively as possible to present a document that is both effective (in terms of getting the information from the page into the reader's mind) and pleasing to the eye.

One of the first thing you'll want to avoid (keeping in mind other things that I've already advised you to avoid, like 20 different sizes and styles of text per page) is pages that are nothing BUT text. Sometimes it's unavoidable (you'll see a page or two like this in almost every issue of the Pokey Press, because sometimes we seem to be drowning in text around here), but even when it IS unavoidable, you can tone the monolithic blocks of text down with subheads, etc. that are of a different size or style. It doesn't quite make the layout as attractive as a page using a balance of text AND graphics, but sometimes it's all you can do...

Another thing to avoid is pages that look empty. Stylistically, it's always good to have a certain amount of what is known as "white space" on the page (especially in advertising layouts - less so in documents), but you don't want to make the page look as though you just didn't have enough material to fill it. Sometimes, if you really DON'T have enough material to fill a page, it's better to tighten things up someplace else, or even cut some material, to make a tighter layout.

So, there you are - you've decided on a look for your document, laid out your document according to that look, mixed things up with text and graphics, and kept your different styles of type to a minimum. What now.

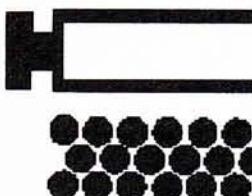
Now, before you start printing it out, take a last look at it. If you can set your desktop publishing software to show you a whole page at once, set it for that view. More than one page would be even better. You're probably not going to be able to read any of the words on those pages, but that's not the point right now. What you want to do is really LOOK at your document. You already know what the words say. You don't need to be able to read them again.

But what you've got to see is how it looks. Squint. That's right, I said squint. Look at the layout, not what is contained in that layout. How does it look. Is it pleasing to YOUR eye ('cause if it ain't, it ain't gonna be pleasing to anybody else's eye either). If you can honestly say that it looks good to your eye, that it looks professional, that you will be PROUD to put that document out under your name, then go ahead, print it out. If not.....well, back to the drawing board....

And there you have it. Of course, you can't take anything I've said in this 3-part series as gospel - everybody, in the end, has to develop his or her own style and way of doing things. All I've tried to do is pass along some of the tricks that have made my job easier here at the Pokey Press, and offer my observations of some of the traps that I've seen some others fall into in some of the 150 some-odd exchange newsletters I see each month.....

In any case, remember the final axiom of the dekstop publisher.....

**IF IT LOOKS LOUSY THIS MONTH.....
WELL, THERE'S ALWAYS NEXT MONTH.....**



PC-DITTO (FROM PAGE 19)

and productivity arena.

••IBM software really does lend itself to hard-drive operation, as an example, Multimate Advantage is supplied on six diskettes, and occupies 2.2 Meg on my hard-drive at work. Lotus 1-2-3 comes on 5 diskettes and occupies just under 1 megabyte of hard-disk space. What this means is unless you also have a hard-drive for your ST, be prepared to swap disks, ALOT!

••I would have liked to have seen documentation that was more complete, and contained more information on setting up PC-Ditto. The entire manual is only 14 pages long.

••There is no default color of the DOS menu when you return from a program. If the program you ran changed colors of text, background, etc., when you return to DOS you could see any combination of text/background/cursor colors. You can correct this by issuing the CLS command either from the DOS prompt or as the last command in an "AUTOEXEC.BAT" file.

••There is no provision for starting the "autoboot" type of programs. This pertains mostly to games, so I don't consider it a great problem.

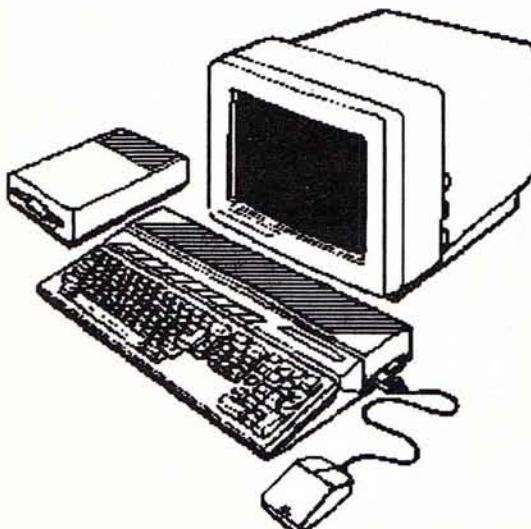
••PC-Ditto is noticeably slower in video intensive operations.

In all fairness again to PC-Ditto, notice my first three complaints have nothing to do with PC-Ditto at all, but rather IBM software in general, and my last three complaints fall into the "nit-picky" category, and really don't reflect on the overall operation of PC-Ditto.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Avant-Garde Systems has managed to do what MS-EM, Atari, and many others have been unable to do... deliver an IBM-PC emulator that works! It is the product we've waited so long for! It is an admirable achievement in programming, and it is a product that really does work "as advertised"! If you are an IBM'er at heart but can't afford the hardware tab, then this package has your name on it! If you use an IBM at work, and want to take some of that work home with you, then this is the package for you. But, on the other hand, if you are a master of games, and you are hoping to broaden your horizons with IBM game titles, then I'd say save your money. The degradation in speed will ruin most graphics oriented games.

PC-Ditto
Avant-Garde Systems
Jacksonville, FL
Price \$89.95 S.R.P.
Not Copy Protected



PUBLISHING PARTNER (FROM PAGE 20)

you got except a nice screen display. You have to get it out of the computer and onto a piece of paper.

It's here that Publishing Partner excels. Soft Logik has released printer drivers for almost every conceivable printer, both dot matrix and laser. And these printer drivers push the printers to the max - the ultimate resolution that those printers are capable of putting out (resolution being normally measured in the number of dots per inch). The printing is slow, especially when you're pushing a printer to that extent (for example, using the NEC P6 that I use for the Pokey Press, which prints at 360 dots per inch, it takes about 20 minutes to print out a page). But the extremely high quality of that output makes it an even trade-off against the slow printing speed. For output this good, I'm willing to wait a little longer.

CUSTOMER SUPPORT

I'm usually not one to call a software company to answer my questions. I prefer to work things out for myself. But I had a MAJOR problem with the September issue of the Pokey Press. Somehow the file got corrupted (don't ask me how - I had nothing to do with it - I kept that file away from X-rated videos and seamy strip bars, but it must have slipped out when I wasn't looking...don't blame ME!!!), and I was left with the prospects of starting the whole damn thing over again. I decided to make a fateful call to Soft Logik...

In minutes, I was connected to the co-author of the program. He spent 20 minutes on the phone with me, making suggestions, asking questions, and doing everything he could to help out. In the end, I was back where I started (I'd apparently stumped him - come up with a problem that nobody had ever had before and that he was unable to duplicate or solve...), but it was nice to know that Soft Logik puts that much work into customer support and is that available.

The company also maintains a very high profile on GEnie, the online service from General Electric, and that allows those who use GEnie to communicate directly with Soft Logik using that forum.

ON THE OTHER HAND...

I think I mentioned at the beginning of this review that Publishing Partner is not a perfect program. There are features that are missing (including the ability to flow text smoothly around those graphics I mentioned earlier), and the program does seem to crash a bit too frequently (which means you find yourself saving your work rather frequently - not really a bad idea, if you really think about it....hmmm, maybe the folks at Soft Logik had the same idea....a little something that will force you to backup your work regularly so that you don't lose it to those pesky power demons...).

On the other hand, Soft Logik is in the process of doing a major update of the program (with many of the missing features that users have requested), and they have been more than fair in their update policy up to now. The original version of the program had more than its share of minor bugs - so what did Soft Logik do? Did they post messages on GEnie telling people to send a small amount of cover postage and they'd get the less-buggy update? Not these guys. Everybody who had sent in their registration card got an updated version of the program in the mail. Everybody.

OVERALL...

Overall, Publishing Partner is a must-buy for those who are interested in getting into desktop publishing. It combines ease of use with enormous power and flexibility, from a company that stands strongly behind its products.

If you need to do desktop publishing, you need Publishing Partner. ••

THE LAUGHING I/O PORT

THE DOGMAN CAPER PART III

by Albert X

(SO FAR....I'd been hired by a beautiful dame named Marie Marree to find out who or what had torn the throat out of her late father. The only bit of information she could offer was that her father died with "Dogman" on his lips. After she'd wiped it off his lips, she told me that "Dogman" was the name of a popular computer game. Going into the jaws of Hell searching for the answer to her father's abrupt demise, I'd been given the runaround by a snot-nosed kid in a video arcade, been forced to use violence against a slimy juvenile delinquent in Ye Olde Software Shoppe, and been threatened by an overage chauffeur driving a long black Cadillac with a fat Eastern European gent in the back seat. It was turning out to be a miserable day in the life of a simple, God-fearing private eye...)

I backed out of Ye Olde Computer Shoppe, my .45 a comforting weight in my right hand. In my left arm, I clutched a long box with the name "Atari" on the side. I wasn't happy about but I was now a member of the computer generation. My parents weren't going to have to wait for me at the train station in the rain.

The rest of what the four-eyed rug-rat behind the counter had described as my "new Atari ST computer system" was balanced on the back of the aforementioned four-eyed rug-rat, who was coming out of Ye Olde Computer Shoppe, his eyes on my piece. I'd already decided that I was only going into that Hellhouse they called a computer store once. And since I couldn't carry the two boxes that my "new Atari ST computer system" came in all by myself (not and keep my .45 in hand, ready to plug any of the little piglets that came out of the store after me), I'd volunteered the rug-rat for the honor of assisting me. The cringing wimp hadn't completely understood my request until I had goosed him with the .45.

"Where would you like this, sir?" he gasped, his face mottled from the weight of the boxed monitor he carried. Obviously, he was a member of the vacuous vermin who never exercised. As for me, I had hardly worked up a sweat. Self-restraint in my dealings with women plus a quart of good American bourbon every day kept my strength from being sapped.

"On the curb, slimeball," I growled, gesturing with my .45. He hurried to the curb and gently laid the box beside a fire hydrant. An elderly man with a large German Shepard started toward the fire hydrant and my box; a warning shot through one of the German Shepard's ears turned them back.

I grinned at the four-eyed weasel trembling in front of me. "Thanks a lot, chump," I said.

"No problem, sir," he wheezed. "We're always glad to help a customer."

"Good," I barked. "Now help yourself right out of my face before I lose my temper."

In a blink, the barbag was gone. I glanced down the street and saw the black limo that contained the Fat Man and his son, ones who had warned me off the case. The limo was idling by the curb.

I figured they probably knew where my car was parked.

Perhaps they'd planted a lump of plastic explosive under the seat, or wired the ignition to fry me to a cinder. It had been tried more than once.

Rather than take the chance of not collecting on this job, I decided to hail a cab. Cabbies were usually pretty good at losing a tail. Especially with the right persuasion.

I held up my hand and a multicolored cab from the RGB Cab Company screeched to a halt. Sliding into the backseat with my "new Atari ST computer system", I thrust my pistol toward the driver and said, "That black Caddy behind us. Lose it."

The driver, an ugly chump with a boil between his eyes that looked like the beginnings of a unicorn's horn, glanced at the .45 in my hand and laughed. "Is this some kinda joke?" he whined.

I removed his boil for him with a quick shot. Breathing in the sweet smell of gunsmoke, I said, "No joke, rat-puss. Lose the black Caddy or your nose is next."

He casually wiped the blood from the bridge of his nose and flipped the meter. "You're the fare," he said, turning back to the wheel.

I fell back in my seat as the driver stepped on the gas. With screaming tires, we hit the street. I looked over my shoulder to see the black Cadillac lumber away from the curb.

"Piece of cake," the driver muttered, taking a corner on two wheels. The next ten minutes are as blurred in my mind as the scenery blowing past the windows. But at the end of that ten minutes, the driver turned back to me and said, "The Caddy's gone. Now where do you want me to go?"

"800 West Pokey Street," I said. "It's on the corner."

"Got it," the driver said. I noticed that the wound on his forehead had already scabbed over.

I kept a close watch out the windows as we drove toward my apartment. The Fat Man hadn't scared me, but I didn't care for that wacko talk about "Business is war". You wonder what kind of animals they let walk the streets sometimes. And the ones in the three-piece suits are usually the worst.

I paid the cabbie, giving him a fifty cent tip for the fine job of losing the Fat Man's limo, then hustled up the stairs to my apartment. I had a copy of "Dogman" in my suit jacket, and I was anxious to see what this "game" was all about. The case had taken some odd turns, but "Dogman" was all I had to go on.

It took me about half an hour to set up my "new Atari ST computer system." The plugs seemed to fit, and I had spare outlets in my living room. But the little square thing with the cord didn't mean a thing to me until I realized it had something to do with the "mouse" that all the manuals talked about.

I pried the thing open, but didn't see anything inside that made me think there was a mouse in there. But since a mouse was apparently necessary to make the damn thing run, I figured I'd better make sure I had a happy mouse. Rodents can be a real pain if they're not happy. I got bit by a hamster once and my hand swelled up to the size of a basketball before I lanced it with my Swiss Army knife. Since a basketball-sized hand would make using my .45 a little difficult, I figured I better make sure I didn't get bitten. So I shoved a lump of aged cheddar inside the mouse and put it back together again.

Everything seemed to be set. I turned it on and the screen lit up. The screen was blank for a moment and then I fell back, clawing for my pistol. The ugliest damn dog face in the world was staring at me from the screen, his jaws twisted in a toothy rictus. Above this horrible image was the word "Dogman" in blood-red.

An ominous sound began to issue from the speaker on the side of the monitor. It took me a moment to realize what it was - a hideous growl.

I began to feel a tingling in my scalp and the room was taking on a decidedly red glow when the door behind me flew open and a balding young man and a young blonde woman stepped into the room. "Drop that mouse!" the young man said as the woman launched herself through the air at me. I raised a hand in defense but her weight was too much and I fell back against the monitor striking my head. Everything went black.....

NEXT MONTH: THE SHATTERING CONCLUSION!

CLUB MEETINGS FOR 1987 AND NEWSLETTER FORMAT

MEETING DATES

OCTOBER 13
NOVEMBER 10 DECEMBER 8

NEWSLETTER FORMAT

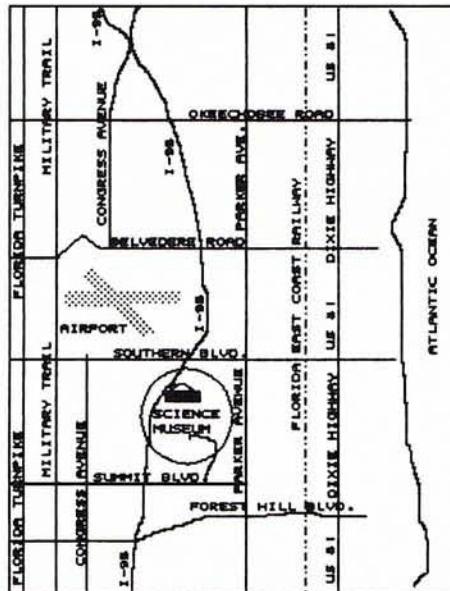
Please help make this newsletter grow by contributing articles, reviews, tips & hints, or artwork. All local submissions receive priority placement in this newsletter.

The following is the format to be used for ALL submissions to the Pokey Press. Please, if possible, use ATARIWRITER, ATARIWRITER +, PAPERCLIP, STWRITER, FIRST WORD, WORD WRITER ST, OR IBM WORD PERFECT files. We also prefer disk submissions (5 1/4" or 3 1/2") or uploads to the Atari Computer Club of the Palm Beaches BBS (305-641-5372) rather than printed submissions, since printed submissions generally require that we retype them before printing.

- DO NOT send files PRINTED TO DISK. If you must print your file to disk, DO NOT turn RIGHT JUSTIFICATION on.
- Put NO extra spaces between paragraphs.
- Remove ALL embedded control characters.

SEE YOU AT THE ATARI COMPUTER CLUB OF THE PALM BEACHES MEETING - THE SECOND TUESDAY OF EACH MONTH AT THE SCIENCE MUSEUM AND PLANETARIUM

**4801 DREHER TRAIL NORTH
WEST PALM BEACH, FLORIDA 33405
PHONE 305-832-1988**



NEXT CLUB MEETING: OCTOBER 13

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BOB WOOLEY, EDITOR
P.O. BOX 1506
SAN LEANDRO CA

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